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September, 2005

GSA Sends Hurricane Relief

By Michael Hardy, Federal Computer Week, 9/8/05

The General Services Administration has been sending supplies and services to the area affected by Hurricane Katrina since August 29, according to an agency announcement issued yesterday. According to the announcement, GSA's contributions include five satellite vehicles, 150 satellite phones and related equipment. GSA has also provided, among other things: 35 million meals, 400,000 gallons of jet fuel, diesel fuel and gasoline, 863 cars, 30 all-terrain vehicles for search-and-rescue operations, 50 recreational vehicle rentals for emergency responders, 263 ambulances, 10,000 cots, 15 mobile kitchens, and 26 modular office trailers.

"Assisting the citizens impacted by Hurricane Katrina is among our nation's highest priorities," said GSA Administrator Perry, in the announcement. "GSA will continue to provide services and resource support to the interagency community so that frontline agencies may focus their activities on assisting citizens and the recovery effort."

DOE "Goes Live" with GovTrip

Department of Energy (DOE) achieved "end-to-end live travel" on August 8th, 2005 through the NGMS's GovTrip. As announced on NGMS's Web site, "after an initial project kickoff in January, the integrated project team (IPT) implemented the migration plan which culminated in the first voucher being processed successfully as part of live test verification on August 3rd.....DOE selected Northrop Grumman's GovTrip based solution to provide travel services for mission support on December 27th, 2004. DOE is on schedule to complete the roll out of the new system nation-wide by June, 2006 using a phased implementation as outlined in their change management strategy."

GSA awards \$1.4 billion in air travel contracts

By Daniel Pulliam of Government Executive Magazine, 8/31/05

Thirteen airlines won General Services Administration contracts for fiscal 2006 worth more than \$1.4 billion to provide discount airfares for more than 4,700 routes. The one-year competitively awarded contracts under GSA's Airline City Pair Program are effective Oct. 1 and will provide nonstop flights to 1,913 markets, covering 95 percent of all nonstop destinations worldwide.

GSA estimates that the contracts will save the government more than \$2.8 billion in fiscal 2006. "It is a remarkable achievement when the airline industry can work together with GSA to provide discounted commercial air passenger transportation services for the federal government," said Barbara Shelton, acting commission of GSA's Federal Acquisition Service.

Under the program, federal travelers receive discounted fares, last-seat availability, full ticket refunds and penalty-free cancellations and schedule changes for 3,978 domestic and 725 international routes. Awards are based on average flight time, the number of flights, price and flight distribution.

AMBASSADOR'S CORNER: The place for feedback and recommendations from valued eTS customers

This summer members of the Ambassador's Club were asked how they book their hotel accommodations when traveling on government business. Since the E-Gov Service online booking tool is in the beginning stages of deployment, 90% of travelers said they call a TMC or the hotel directly. When asked if they were familiar with the government-wide lodging program FedRooms, previously known as FPLP, almost all respondents were aware of the program.

However, many respondents admitted they automatically thought their TMC would book a FedRooms property. As a traveler it is important to note, you must specify FedRooms accommodations. It can not be assumed that the TMC will automatically book a FedRooms property for you.

FedRooms has changed the way the program's rates are displayed in the E-Gov Service and the Global Distribution System (GDS). FedRooms changed from a general non-secure rate to a **Rate Access Code**, which is a secure code that is only bookable by government travel management companies (TMCs or CTOs) who provide their pseudo city codes (PCC, Agency ID or SID) to the FedRooms administrator, Kindall@FedRooms.com.

Likewise, if you book a hotel directly yourself, visit the FedRooms' Web site at www.fedrooms.com to identify properties in your city of destination. When you contact the hotel (via online or phone) specify the FedRooms' rate.

National Travel Forum 2006, a Star Studded Event!

Mark your calendars for the National Travel Forum, 2006, ***Where the Travel Stars Shine***. Being held at the Westin Bonaventure Hotel, Los Angeles, CA, June 26-29.

The National Travel Forum welcomes the NBTA Government Travel group. For more information on NTF call 1-800-315-4333 or email help@nationaltravelforum.org.